



National Bison Association

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Weekly Update from the National Bison Association

A news and update service *exclusively* for members of the National Bison Association.
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December 22, 2017

Happy Holidays from the National Bison Association!

As the curtain drops on a record-setting year for the business, the National Bison Association staff, officers and directors wish everyone the best for this Holiday season. This year has brought continued strength and prosperity to producers across North America. And, prospects are bright for continued success in 2018...a stepping stone on the path to restoring one million bison to North America.

The NBA office will be closed next week so that Dave, Jim and Barb can spend time with their families, and catch a quick breather before the hectic pace leading up to the 2018 Winter Conference and Gold Trophy Show and Sale. Accordingly, there won't be a Weekly Update next week. We'll be back keeping you posted on all of the developments in the association—and the bison business—on January 5th.

Give for Growth! Support the Bison Business, and Get a Deduction

Don't miss a chance to support the growth of the bison business, and to receive a tax deduction, with a year-end check to the National Bison Association's Growth Fund.

"The Growth Fund underwrites many of our outreach efforts that exceed the capacity of our normal operating budget," said Dave Carter, NBA executive director. "In the past few months, alone, the Growth Fund has supported our participation at the National FFA Convention, the National Association of Farm Broadcasting annual convention, and at the National Agricultural Lenders Conference. All of these are vital forums to help us connect with new producers, and with new customers."

The NBA encourages members to donate at least \$1 per every head sold or weaned over the course of the past year. Funds sent to the Growth Fund are not a charitable contribution, but can be deducted on your 2017 taxes as a business expense. Contributions can be made on-line at: _____, or by mail to the NBA office at 8600 Wolff Ct., Westminster, CO 80031.

More Than 140 Head Consigned from 37 Consignors

Producers looking for good stock to expand their herds and prospective ranchers looking to find animals that will provide a foundation for success will all find plenty to choose from at the 2018 Gold Trophy Show and Sale, scheduled January 16-20 at the National Western Stock Show in Denver.

More than 140 live bison have been consigned for the show and sale, with offerings ranging from 28 yearling bulls to three pens-of-five heifer calves and much more. See a full list of consignments at <https://bisoncentral.com/gold-trophy-show-and-sale/>

"This is the largest line-up, with the greatest selection of animals, that we've seen for nearly 20 years," said Jim Matheson, assistant director of the NBA. The 37 consignors registering animals include six first-time consignors, so there will be plenty of 'new blood' at this year's Gold Trophy Show and Sale."

Live bison will begin arriving in the Yards at the National Western on Tuesday, January 16th. Judging will take place on Thursday and Friday, with the results announced at the NBA Winter Conference Banquet on Friday, January 19th. The live animal auction will be conducted at 10:30 a.m. on January 20th in the National Western Livestock Center Arena. Online bidding will be available as well through liveauctions.tv.

In addition to the live animal auction, 20 carcasses have been entered into the GTSS Market Class competition. Those carcasses will be auctioned at 10 a.m. on Saturday the 20th, immediately preceding the live animal sale.

Advertising Available in GTSS Catalog

With more than 140 live head and 20 carcasses being offered from 37 consignors, the 2018 Gold Trophy Show and Sale promises to draw record interest from bison producers and industry enthusiasts alike. With an upcoming deadline of January 3rd, don't miss the opportunity to get your company's message out to the near-record crowd expected to be attending the GTSS sale on January 20th, or participating remotely by video.

"The surge in consignments--and consignors--in this year's Gold Trophy Show and Sale reflect the growing interest in the bison business. This catalog will be in the hands of people who are serious about building their business, so it's a great way to connect," said Dave Carter, executive director of the NBA.

Advertising space in the catalog ranges from \$400 for a four-color full-page ad to \$75 for business card ads. The advertising rates and requirements are available [here](#).

Reserved ad space and artwork must be submitted by Wednesday, January 3rd. Inquire about availability and reserve by emailing jim@bisoncentral.com by December 29th.

Register for the Winter Conference by January 4th

Just over a week remains to register for the 2018 NBA Winter Conference! at <https://bisoncentral.com/winter-conference/>. Take a moment to review our final conference agenda [here](#) and see why you don't want to miss out on this conference. And did we mention the food? We'll be serving some great bison-themed meals throughout the week including roast, the top two selections from our bison-chili contest - in which attendees will decide the winner, flat iron steak and more. So please join us in Denver next month as we continue "roaming to success"!

Renaissance 2 Queen Room Sought in Exchange for 1 King

We've had a NBA member who's attending the Winter Conference request that we share the following with others who are attending the conference and may be able to help:

We are attending the NBA Winter Conference and the hotel's 2 Queen Bed rooms are sold out for the week, which leaves one King bed rooms, which we've reserved. However, to save a few dollars, we'd prefer to have 2 Queens to accommodate the four of us. If anyone has a room with 2 Queens that could get by with 1 King just the same, we'd love to trade rooms. If interested, please contact Jim Matheson at jim@bisoncentral.com, and he can work with reservations at the hotel to complete the transfer. There is no difference in cost for the two room types.

Please let us know if you can help a fellow member out.

South Dakota park to make unplanned bison roundup after fire

(From ABC News)

A [South Dakota](#) state park known for annual buffalo roundups drawing thousands of spectators will perform an unscheduled one in the coming days to determine how a historic wildfire affected the animals.

Officials at Custer State Park located its bison herd by Thursday afternoon, and every animal found so far was alive, said Kobee Stalder, the park's visitor services program manager. However, he cautioned it's unlikely all wildlife escaped unscathed from the fire that has consumed more than 84 square miles (218 square kilometers) in the park and beyond its borders.

The park said that investigators from the South Dakota Wildland Fire Division attributed the cause of the blaze to a downed power line.

Staff will conduct on the "impromptu roundup" to assess the herd of roughly 860 bison and likely give them pneumonia immunizations because of the wildfire, Stalder said.

"Custer State Park is known for their herd of bison," Stalder said. "Every other question any time we post on social media is, you know, 'Are the bison OK?' 'Is the wildlife OK?' 'Are the burros OK?'"

The wildfire, which started Monday, is the third-largest recorded in the Black Hills. There had been no human injuries, and main park buildings have been spared from the blaze, officials said. Well-wishers have posted online with concerns for firefighters, but also for animals like the bison, the captivating national mammal.

Read more. <http://abcnews.go.com/Lifestyle/wireStory/south-dakota-park-make-unplanned-bison-roundup-fire-51802700>

Northwest Indiana Wild Bison Herd Nearly Doubles in Year

(From US News and World Report)

MOROCCO, Ind. (AP) — A wild bison herd has almost doubled since being brought to a northwest [Indiana](#) prairie in 2016.

The Nature Conservancy brought 23 bison to its Kankakee Sands preserve in October 2016. The bison have given birth to 10 calves this year — five bulls and five cows, The South Bend Tribune reported. Ten more bison were brought from Wind Cave National Park in [South Dakota](#) to join the herd in October.

All of the animals have survived.

Land steward Tony Capizzo said the young bulls have gained 200 to 300 pounds (91 to 136 kilograms) over the past year. The bison were weighed and vaccinated during a visit with a veterinarian.

Also, hair was taken from the animals' tails to conduct genetic testing. Capizzo said her managers want to reduce health issues by minimizing the risk of inbreeding, so they're looking for diversity in the bison's gene pool. That will help determine which among the herd they'll cull, he says, which won't be done until it reaches 60 to 70 bison.

The Nature Conservancy brought in the animals because bison are natural prairie farmers. Bison till soil with their hooves, prune trees saplings with their horns, chew down grass and carry seeds in their fur.

Capizzo said the herd isn't big enough to change the habitat so far. Controlled burns are also conducted to help breed the prairie plants.

The Wind Cave animals descended from bison that the American Bison Society had placed in 1913, according to the Nature Conservancy.

Read more. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana/articles/2017-12-14/wild-bison-herd-sees-growth-in-indiana>

Caprock Chronicles: Picking bison bones for profit

(From the Lubbock Avalanche Journal)

EDITOR'S NOTE: This week's Caprock Chronicles essay is by Jack Becker, a librarian at Texas Tech. It looks at the business of picking up bones from the millions of dead bison on the Great Plains in the 1880s and 1890s.

Two lines from the song "Homesteaders Ballard" sums up the early life of some of the first settlers on the Great Plains. They went:

*"We pick up bones to keep from starving and
We picked up chips to keep from freezing."*

The words to the song probably came closer to reflecting the truth than romanticizing the past when sung by early Llano Estacado settlers — who lived through hard times before Lubbock and surrounding counties became "settled up."

All through the 1880s and 1890s the earliest settlers of the area could depend on bison bone picking for a source of income. If crops failed and cattle died, one dependable source of income was the bone trade.

A successful bone trade depended on three factors: a ready source of bones (supply), manufacturers who had need for the bones (demand), and transportation to get the bones from West Texas to eastern markets (railroads). In the years before the turn of the last century all three factors occurred, producing a profitable, although temporary industry, at just the right time for early Lubbock and surrounding county pioneers.

The great kill-off of bison during the 1870s left millions of buffalo bones strewn across the prairies of West Texas, undisturbed for 15 or more years. A boom period of bone picking followed.

Eastern industrialists found a use for animal bones in the manufacture of fertilizer, sugar, china, buttons and handles. And railroads made it possible for the supply of bison bones to reach manufacturers, which made the trade possible.

In slack times, when duties around the farm or ranch eased up, early settlers gathered bones for sale. It was a job even children could do.

Read more. <http://lubbockonline.com/caprock-chronicles/local-news/news/2017-12-15/caprock-chronicles-picking-bison-bones-profit>

The New West: When 'Action Jackson' Turned Buffalo Rancher

(From The Big Sky Explorer)

In his heyday, some considered him a local folk hero in government uniform. Others were not so smitten. The name Robert Bob "Action" Jackson still summons mixed reactions across the Greater Yellowstone region.

Jackson, a retired backcountry ranger who spent more than 30 years in Yellowstone, became best known for fighting wildlife poachers in the remote Thorofare district.

Today, his name still remains a cuss word for Wyoming outfitters, whom he claimed were illegally dumping salt licks next to Yellowstone's southern boundary to lure trophy elk out of the park onto the firing lines of their fat cat hunting clients.

But that is old history. It turns out that for most of the while Jackson served as a part-time ranger in America's oldest national park, he was also, less triumphantly, growing his own bison herd on the tallgrass prairie of his native Iowa.

Between the observations he made of bison in Yellowstone, and his own raising of animals for profit and putting healthy meat on dinner tables, he says he had an epiphany. Not a single lightning bolt moment, but several.

Paying attention to how bison organize themselves on the landscape, he started recognizing patterns of order. He noticed subherds within herds, satellite groups spinning off from the main mass of animals, and distinctive family structure.

Read more. <http://www.explorebigsky.com/the-new-west-when-action-jackson-turned-buffalo-rancher/23323>

Montana Wildlife Officials Ask Wyoming to Stop Feeding Elk

(From The Lexington Herald Leader)

JACKSON HOLE, Wyo. -- Montana wildlife officials are asking their Wyoming counterparts to stop feeding elk after chronic wasting disease has appeared in the state.

Jackson Hole News and Guide reports the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission sent a letter last week to the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, saying their elk feeding practices could accelerate the spread of the fatal, contagious disease.

The Montana letter says officials respect how Wyoming handles its affairs, but management of the disease in Montana is affected by what happens in the neighboring state.

Full text:

<http://www.kentucky.com/living/health-and-medicine/article189741134.html>

Conservation Groups Call for a New Strategy to Combat Brucellosis

(From WyomingPublicMedia.org)

Conservation groups want a fresh take on management of a contagious disease occurring in the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem called brucellosis, which affects elk, bison and livestock. It can kill fetuses, decrease fertility and hurt milk production, and many consider it an economic threat, too.

The Sierra Club, Western Watersheds Project, Wyoming Wildlife Advocates and the Gallatin Wildlife Association released a statement, saying they wanted to shift focus of disease management away from wildlife and towards livestock. Lloyd Dorsey, conservation director of Wyoming's Sierra Club chapter, said that in recent years there have been too many bison kills in the name of protecting the livestock industry, even though there's no record of bison transmitting the disease to livestock. The groups' statement also mentioned elk feedgrounds as

another major issue, because they keep animals in too close of quarters for too long, which can promote disease transmission.

Dorsey said there are other effective ways to manage brucellosis without endangering wildlife. "It can be mitigated with vaccines for cattle, again, separation, holding the cattle using animal husbandry techniques such as fences and phasing out the elk feed ground, and allowing elk and bison to free range," Dorsey said.

He also spoke to the value of conserving predator populations in the area.

Full text:

<http://wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/conservation-groups-call-new-strategy-combat-brucellosis>

Campbell Soup Thinks Bison is *Mm mm Good*

(From Meatpoultry.com)

CAMDEN, N.J. — To tap into today's trends, the chefs at the Campbell Soup Co. resurrected a 101-year-old soup recipe. The company earlier this year launched a limited-edition Campbell's Beefsteak Tomato Soup created by John Thompson Dorrance, inventor of condensed soup and president of the company from 1914 to 1930. The soup, made with tomatoes from southern New Jersey Farms, may be the first of several products developed to reflect the company's culinary heritage.

"We're so proud of that, and there's so much inspiration to do more with John Dorrance's recipes," said Thomas Griffiths, certified master chef and vice president of Campbell's Culinary & Baking Institute.

Griffiths is working with a company archivist to bring to life more of the Campbell Soup Co.'s toothsome history. Another icon of the Camden-based business is Pepperidge Farm founder Margaret Rudkin, who began baking bread to feed her family during the Great Depression. "I have the Margaret Rudkin Pepperidge Farm cookbook on my desk," Griffiths said.

Culinary heritage was one of six trends in Campbell Soup's fifth annual trends report. Other trends include feel-good treats, botanical flavors, limited edition innovation and specialty meats. Some of these trends may already be spotted in Campbell Soup's portfolio. For example, a new variety of Campbell's Chunky Maxx soup features bison.

"We'll have more to come, other really interesting meats in our foods, in our soups," Griffiths said. "People really love them."

Trends featured in previous reports continue to evolve and expand, Griffiths said.

"I'd love to think we're actually moving trends forward and that we've become a really important industry leader in the trends at this point, having five years of doing this," he said.

In an interview with *Food Business News*, a sister publication to *MEAT+POULTRY*, Griffiths discussed the latest trends and how Campbell Soup's chefs are translating them in product development.

Source:

http://www.meatpoultry.com/articles/news_home/Business/2017/12/Food_trend_forecast_according.aspx?ID=%7B6924F29B-9E56-437D-B67E-7AF912D22C92%7D&cck=1

NRCS Announces \$10 Million Available for Conservation Innovation Grants

(From Feedstuffs)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it is offering grants for innovative ideas for conservation strategies and technologies. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) plans to invest \$10 million in the Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program, funding innovative conservation projects in three focus areas: grazing lands, organic systems and soil health. Grant proposals are due Feb. 26, 2018.

"Conservation Innovation Grants play a critical role in developing and implementing new methods to help our customers conserve natural resources, strengthen their local communities and improve their bottom lines," said Rob Johansson, acting deputy undersecretary for farm production and conservation. "Today's announcement supports our efforts to help producers build economically strong and resilient farms and ranches by providing producers tools to utilize across their working farmlands."

NRCS uses the CIG program to work with partners to accelerate transfer and adoption of promising technologies and approaches that address some of the nation's most pressing natural resource concerns. This year, NRCS is focusing funding in these areas:

- **Grazing lands** -- Helping livestock producers make grazing management decisions, encouraging prescribed burning as a grazing management practice and improving access to conservation planning tools used for developing grazing management plans.
- **Organic agriculture systems** -- Helping organic producers develop innovative cropping and tillage systems, edge-of-field monitoring, crop rotations and intercropping systems.
- **Soil health** -- Supporting both cropping and grazing systems, in a variety of climatic zones, that incorporate soil health management systems for addressing specific resource concerns like nutrients and availability, and evaluating multiple soil health assessment methods to assist in the development of new soil health indicators and thresholds.

Greg Fogel with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) applauded the focus areas, noting that choosing organic agriculture systems, soil health and grazing lands as the three priority areas for the fiscal 2018 CIG program "sends a strong signal about where additional investment is needed in the coming years. Conservation agriculture, including organic farming, is an economic driver that provides huge benefits to family farmers while improving natural resources and environmental benefits for the generations to come. It is only by farming with the future at the forefront of our minds that we can deliver to the American people a food and farm system that they can be proud of – one in which family farmers can make an honest living providing safe and abundant food to their neighbors and communities."

Fogel added, "With the addition of organic systems as a CIG priority area, USDA is acknowledging the tremendous impact the organic industry has had – and will have – on American agriculture. Combined with the fundamental priorities of soil health and grazing lands – and with much-needed resources directed specifically toward underserved farmers – we

expect that the (fiscal) 2018 CIG projects will produce groundbreaking, industry-innovating results.”

“Every sector of American agriculture has its unique conservation challenges,” Johansson said. “CIG enables USDA to help support new, innovative tools and techniques, which have helped U.S. agriculture become the powerhouse we see today, leading the world in both production efficiency and conservation delivery.”

Potential applicants may review the announcement of program funding available at www.grants.gov, which includes application materials and submission procedures. All U.S.-based entities and individuals are invited to apply, with the sole exception of federal agencies. Up to 20% of CIG funds will be set aside for proposals from historically underserved producers, veteran farmers or ranchers or groups serving these customers.

NRCS is hosting a webinar for potential CIG applicants at 4 p.m. (Eastern) on Jan. 11, 2018. Information on how to join the webinar can be found [here](#).

CIG is authorized and funded under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Projects can last up to three years. The maximum award amount for any project this year is \$2 million.

RELEASED: USDA NAHMS Report on Cattle and Calves Death Loss in the U.S.

(From USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Bulletin)

USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) has released Death Loss in U.S. Cattle and Calves Due to Predator and Nonpredator Causes, 2015, a comprehensive report on producer-reported causes of death in cattle and calves in all 50 states.

Since 1995, NAHMS has teamed with USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and Wildlife Services to produce reports on cattle death loss in the United States every 5 years. This report provides analyses of cattle and calves losses in 2015. In addition, death losses by operation type (beef, dairy, mixed, and other) are provided and, when possible, losses in 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010 were included for comparison.

Losses for adult cattle and for calves are reported separately and are categorized as predator and nonpredator related. In addition, producer-reported methods used to mitigate losses due to predators, and the cost of those methods, are reported.

Full text:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAAPHIS/bulletins/1cd6c28>

New WA Rules Would Require RFID for Cattle in Some Cases

(From Washington State Dept. of Agriculture News Release)

OLYMPIA - The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) filed a notice of intent today to update rules concerning livestock identification, specifically requiring Radio Frequency Identification, or RFID, in cases where cattle are currently required to be identified with metal tags.

The proposed rule amendments would require official U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) RFID tags:

When female cattle receive brucellosis vaccinations.

When bulls are sampled for trichomoniasis.

On all sexually intact cattle and bison over 18 months old presented for sale at a public livestock market.

Current rules already require official identification in these cases, but allow for the use of metal ID tags. The proposed amendments would swap metal tags for an RFID tag.

"Updating our rules to incorporate RFID devices is an important step in strengthening our state's animal disease traceability system," Washington state Veterinarian Dr. Brian Joseph said. "The livestock industry could be devastated by a disease outbreak if WSDA and the USDA were unable to contain it quickly, something that an effective animal disease traceability program can help us accomplish."

The paperwork WSDA filed today involves two CR 101 documents, the first step in making changes in the Washington Administrative Code. WSDA is proposing to amend WAC 16-86 Cattle and Bison Diseases and WAC 16-604 Public Livestock Markets with the language requiring the RFID devices.

Full text:

<https://agr.wa.gov/news/2017/NR2017-12-20RFID.aspx>

Tennessee Agriculture Enterprise Fund

Tennessee's new Agriculture Enterprise Fund (AEF) is administered by the Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the Department of Economic and Community Development. The AEF will award grants to starting or expanding agricultural and food businesses, farmers, nonprofits, local governments, and other entities in Tennessee, or those whose project will be located in Tennessee. Successful grant recipients must demonstrate a strong potential for impact on local farm income, access to markets, increased capacity, or agricultural innovation. Priority will be given to businesses located in at-risk counties, distressed counties, and counties adjoining at-risk or distressed counties.

The Department of Agriculture will review applications on a rolling basis.

Learn more. <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/topic/agriculture-enterprise-fund>

North Carolina Agricultural Reinvestment Fund

Farmers in Alamance, Bertie, Caswell, Chatham, Chowan, Davidson, Davie, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton, Orange, Person, Randolph, Rowan, Vance, Wake, and Warren counties of North Carolina can apply for 2018 Agricultural Reinvestment Fund cost-share grants.

This grant program administered by RAFI assists entrepreneurial and innovative farmers and collaborative groups in developing new sources of agricultural income. Cost-share grants provide up to \$9,000 for individual farmers and up to \$11,000 for collaborative groups.

The final application deadline is January 10, 2018.

Learn more. <http://rafiusa.org/blog/nc-farmers-apply-now/>